

THE ACADEMY AND LITERATURE

No. 2257 [Registered as a
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Registered as a Newspaper in the United Kingdom, and at the New York Post Office as Second-class Mail Matter. Subscriptions: Inland, 15s.; Foreign, 17s. 6d. a year, post free.

The Editorial and Advertising Offices of the ACADEMY are at 8 & 9 St. James's Market, Jermyn Street, S.W.

The Editors cannot undertake to return unsolicited Manuscripts which are not accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope. The receipt of a proof does not imply acceptance of an article.

EPILOGUE.

No miracles! in this my night
Groping I walk and mazed,
But still the blind are given sight,
And still the dead are raised!

Was it two thousand years ago
They hanged Him on a tree?
He hangs there yet! as all we know
Who walk on Calvary.

And when His soldiers nail us up,
And weeping women pray,
We too shall drink of that same cup
He drank, and drinks, to-day.

We too shall give that dreadful cry
He gave, and still must give;
Agony upon agony,
But we at last shall live!

H. S.

LIFE AND LETTERS.

Parliament and the Haymarket are up. The rest is silence.

We wonder if it is "calumny" to state that some of our Members of Parliament are really taking holidays. In the House of Commons, on the last day but one of the Session, Mr. Asquith was full of righteous indignation as to suggestions about "grouse

as usual." But when Parliament reassembles it will be interesting to note the bronze on faces that were a trifle pallid before the adjournment, and it would be still more interesting if we could learn how much of that bronze has been acquired in the pursuit of public objects and how much of it is the result of pursuits of another kind.

The Master of the Rolls has declared from the Bench that it cannot "nowadays" be held that a person who publicly denies the existence of God is a blasphemer. We merely inquire why "nowadays."

We regret to have to announce the death of Mr. W. A. Eaton, author of "The Fireman's Wedding," a poem, by the way, which we are ashamed to say we have never read. Two stanzas from that immortal work, however, are wafted our way by an obliging ha'penny paper, and here they are:—

What are we looking at, guv'nor?
Well, you see that carriage and pair?
It's a wedding—that's what it is, sir;
And aren't they a beautiful pair?
They don't want no marrow-bone music,
There's the firemen's band come to play!
It's a fireman that's going to be married.
And you don't see such sights every day!

We are told that Mr. Eaton was "the people's poet," and assuming that much, we must, of course, condole with the people on their great loss. We have nothing but respect for the memory of Mr. Eaton and for his works so far as we have the pleasure to be acquainted with them, and it is in no carping spirit that we desire to point out that the late "people's poet" was not the only poet who found inspiration in the doings of firemen. A verse swims in our memory which runs more or less as follows:—

My old man's a fireman,
What do you think of that?
He wears gorblimey trousers
And a little gorblimey hat.

Such stanzas are imperishable. We do not know the name of the author, and we do not know whether he still lives or whether he has joined the great company of sweet singers for whom firemen are a legend. But whoever he may be, he is plainly as good a poet as Eaton, and in the quality of lyricism, at any rate, quite as good as Ezra Pound.

There is a distinct slump on 'Change. The "Saturday Review" had no poetry last week, and

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neither had the "Outlook." The "Athenæum" we no longer read, and we have heard only of the "Spectator" lately because the daughter of the editor has been getting married to a Welshman. There is no harm in that, as Mr. Lloyd George might say. But the "Nation" prints a whole column of short poems by Mr. Wilfred Wilson Gibson. They are headed up "Poetry" in Old English, with the sub-title "Battle," and they are copyright in the United States of America. There are four of them, and on the whole we like them. For example, who could resist the following?

They ask me where I've been,
And what I've done and seen;
And what can I reply
Who know it wasn't I,
But someone just like me,
Who went across the sea,
And with my head and hands
Killed men in foreign lands, . . .
Though I must bear the blame
Because he bore my name!

If it is necessary to copyright this sort of thing in America, we can well understand how it comes to pass that President Wilson is "too proud to fight."

The Welsh Eistedfodd is taking place "as usual." Mr. H. E. Morgan is still at the Ministry of Munitions, Mr. Lloyd George has gone to Bangor on Eistedfodd business. And Mr. Augustus John is about to paint a portrait of Mr. Lloyd George. All's right with the world—or the Welsh. Whether all will be right with the portrait remains to be seen. Mr. John is said by ill-conditioned critics to have made a mess of his picture of G. B. S. If he makes a mess of the Minister of Munitions it will be a pity. The remaining high news from the inner court of things is that Mr. Wyndham Lewis, editor of "Blast" Nos. 1 and 2, and we hope of all consecutive or future numbers, has appeared at a place of entertainment in the West End of London clothed on with a new light suit which bears a striking resemblance to a suit of Mr. John's.

The advertisement writers are really getting beyond themselves. Before the War they scooped up the leader columns of some of the penny papers. We had not been fighting Germany a fortnight before they nobbled the War Office and flaunted themselves on every hoarding with gibes or sloppy entreaties for the raising of recruits. They are nothing if not

frantically and fiercely "on the nail." The "Times" of Wednesday published for the benefit of a gasping world a whole page advertisement, which began as follows:—

Sir or Madam,—

Though we all hoped the great European war should have been ended much earlier, and certainly before the new season of bulbs should open, it seems, to the regret of the whole world, that not the slightest sign of coming peace is to be found anywhere, and that this year also we shall have to sell bulbs under the same distressed circumstances as last year.

A war that declines to end before the new season of bulbs should open is obviously a scandalous, abominable and intolerable affair, and that we should be compelled to "sell bulbs under the same distressed circumstances as last year" renders it abundantly plain that there is indeed something rotten in the state of Europe. And we shall take leave to add that there is something rottener still in the state of mind of persons who consider it smart to engage their queasy pens in compositions of this character.

What has become of the Poet Laureate? We have been a year at war, and in that year the English deeds of derring-do on land and sea have been almost as plentiful as blackberries; but the Poet Laureate, who in private life we believe is known as Mr. Robert Bridges, does not appear to have pulled down his harp a single once. Rather has he left the work of putting into poetry what is intended for poetry to the incorrigible Canon Rawnsley. Of course, it may not be any part of Mr. Bridge's official duty to celebrate the achievements of mere soldiers and sailors, but he is a poet, and he has leisure and the Laureate's call on the "Times" newspaper, and it seems astonishing that he can keep silence. Also one cannot help wondering what is stirring in the soul of Mr. Kipling these days.

We note that under the heading of Current Cant the "New Age" prints an extract from a paragraph which appeared in a late number of the "Academy." Mr. Orage has had some experience in the matter of apologies, and if his suggestion that our perfectly reasonable criticism as to the objectionableness of one of his poets is "cant" means that he is blowing up for another storm, we shall be perfectly willing to afford him opportunities for getting once more on the knee. When the "New Age" feels that it would like a taste of the old thump it has only to let us know.

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We have to thank one of the morning illustrated ha'porths for the information that Mr. Grant Richards, publisher and author of "Bittersweet," wears a monocle and writes his novels "in the train." We are quite willing to admit that "Bittersweet" ought to have been written by somebody who wears a monocle, but that it was written "in a train" we do not believe. Perhaps somebody who has enquired particularly into these matters will tell us where exactly the average publisher is in the habit of writing works like "Bittersweet." Or, for that matter, where indeed any man of flesh and blood writes novels. Without knowing anything as to the circumstances, we should say that considerable portions of "Bittersweet" appear to us to have been dictated. And by this we do not mean that the style of the book is slipshod or jumpy, but that it has qualities of directness and deftness which are not usually compassed by the novelist who uses a pen.

The death of W. O. Summers, the founder of the Gallery Firstnighters' Club, inspires us to many melancholy reflections. A wholly human and lovable little figure, "Willy" in his day was well known in theatrical and Bohemian London, but for the last few years had drifted into the underworld, and his end must have been a welcome release. Many of his friends of old time will share our feelings at the loss of one who made life brighter by his witty and humorous personality.

RECESSIONAL.

To the great relief of the subconscious spirit, we have had a week of what, although it is war time, may be not improperly described as peace. For once in twelve agitated months the tumult and the shouting have died down, the lawyers have been dumb, Mr. Asquith has reproofed nobody. Mr. Lloyd George has made no munition speeches. Those heaven-born questioning knights, Sir Henry Dalziel and Sir Arthur Markham, have put their notes of interrogation away for the nonce, and in plain words all is quiet on the Potomac, even though on the Vistula and the Ypres Canal the old rumblings be as lively as ever. And it seems as if in these seven days of freedom from the babblers we have turned instinctively, almost as children might, to some of the things which appertain to the spirit. On Wednesday there was what the newspapers described as "a

solemn intercession service" at St. Paul's, at which the King and Queen and the Premier and most of the Cabinet (thank heaven!), not to mention many members of the aristocracy and the common public, were present. Similar services were held in every large town throughout the country. Of the St. Paul's and similar services we shall say nothing excepting that no right-minded person disapproves of them, and they will not be without their proper effect on the soul of the country. And on the evening of these services there was a great meeting at the London Opera House, which meeting was addressed by the Rt. Hon. Arthur James Balfour, First Lord of the Admiralty. Mr. Balfour, as all the world knows, has made many speeches in his time, but in common with Lord Roseberry he is an orator of the plain unvarnished stamp, entirely free from the taint of sensationalism, brilliant by temperament rather than by intention, and well acquainted with the value of silence. Throughout almost the whole of this war he has kept silence. When he was out of the Government he permitted the Government to do the talking; since he took office in the Coalition he has made no set speeches either in the House or in the country, but has devoted himself steadily to the onerous duties of his department. But he went to the London Opera House on Wednesday and struck a note which, though it might be the obvious note to strike, is a note of which we have heard sadly too infrequently during these late months of turmoil and tub-thumping. We reproduce herewith those sentences of Mr. Balfour's speech which in our opinion are the sentences that have long required to be said and driven home to the consciousness of Englishmen.

Why then, I ask, in the first place do I feel so confident about the issue of this struggle? Well, in the first place, if I had been speaking to such an audience as this twelve months ago, what could I have expressed except hopes that the German calculations, notorious throughout the world, were nevertheless mistaken? What could I have said to you except that organisation is not everything; that truth and justice still mean something; that the most elaborate system of manufacturing confidence, of manufacturing falsehoods, of manufacturing—a more honourable kind of manufacture—of manufacturing great armies admirably equipped—those arts, great as they are—do not necessarily rule the world; and that I have a firm belief in the eternal trend in the direction of justice, in the direction of righteousness, and in the direction of ultimate peace?

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Organisation is not everything; truth and justice still mean something. . . . I have a firm belief in the internal trend in the direction of justice, in the direction of righteousness, and in the direction of ultimate peace. We have here at once a message for our encouragement and a hint for the taking of our feet out of easy but wrong paths. Mr. Balfour's short plain words hereby put to us are of more importance and have more energising force in them than all the conscription talk, all the munition talk, all the speeding-up talk, all the goading and gibing, reproving and threatening, that ever came out of the frothy mouths of our carpet-bagging dictators, or ever will come out of them. They mean that whatever happens we must not put all of our faith in material things, which of late has become not only the tendency but the absolute and only fashion. Men and munitions are indeubitably necessary to successful warfare, and we must have them and have them in plenty, but they are not by any means the only—or, for that matter, the most—vital necessities. Behind them we must have the knowledge and the faith that they are not everything, that truth and justice still mean something, and that there are of a fact in the universe eternal trends in the direction of justice and righteousness. When Whitehall and its brood of Pushers and Goers and advertisers and galvanisers get some sort of a hold of this knowledge, we shall be all the stronger and all the better off. The fighting strength of England, the strength that will ultimately and surely bring about the victories of truth and justice and righteousness has not, as appears to be commonly supposed, been called into being by the rhetoric of Mr. Lloyd George, and still less by the pushfulness and miraculous business powers of Mr. Le Bas and Mr. H. E. Morgan. England's strength and glory, and England's will to fight for England and all that England stands for in her heart were there before these enterprising gentlemen were ever thought of, and will be there and triumphant whether Mr. Lloyd George talks or keeps his mouth shut, and whether the rest of them strive to put things on a business footing or not. Life is not business, and for that we ought to thank God; and the people who would take a nation by the scruff of the neck and run it on the lines of a Gordon Selfridge emporium are a reflection on the commonwealth and a joke on humanity. Let them ponder the truth that Mr. Balfour has spoken, and moderate their boastings and their transports accordingly.

MARK RUTHERFORD.

I.—NOVELS OF MEN, AND PHILOSOPHY.

Six slender volumes comprise the novels of Mark Rutherford. At first we are piqued by being so abstemiously fed, but with mature study we see that the author was wise. There are early signs of recurrence in type and incident; we find that limited autobiographic material is being eked out. The genius of Rutherford was individual and introspective. That he was forced by this quality of his talent to move inside the prescribed range of personal contacts was the source both of his power and weakness. The fascination of Rutherford is that by giving intimacy and movement to formidable matters of thought he is continually engaging our interest as deeply in them as in the domestic episodes with which he connects them.

The well-known "Autobiography" (1881) and "Deliverance" (1885) of "Mark Rutherford" reproduce in varying reflex many of the experiences of their actual author, William Hale White. Born in the early thirties, White, a young student training for a ministry under Evangelical Dissent, was rejected by his college owing to the growth and change in his convictions. Mark Rutherford of the books, because he reached through congealing Christian dogma to their meaning and "natural origin in the necessities of human nature," came into troublous variance with his sectarian flock. He preached that, "We overlook the manifestation of Christ to-day, and die, perhaps, without recognising it!" that, "Generally speaking, the miracle was a very intense statement of a divine truth"; and that, "Christ shall judge the world," signified, "It is an incalculable advantage for us to have some irreversible standard set up in us by which everything we meet is to be judged." When through contact with the noble agnostic Mardon, his opinions got still more subversive of the lethargic creed of his East-Anglian countryside, he resigned his second appointment, a Unitarian pastorate. His ideas brought him also to a break with his betrothed. He believed that, "In the love of a woman to the man who is of no account God has provided us with a true testimony of what is in his own heart"; and he believed as deeply that, in love, a man should obey, at whatever cost, only the predilection and sacred prompting of inmost heart. Humanly, too, he was thwarted. Modest and shy, he sought friendships that were epic in scope; he encountered mainly provincial spite and indifference. The isolation and distress consequent upon this double rupture left

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him a prey to gloom and self-upbraiding. He suffers from terrible depressions, and recounts in detail how he conquered his moods by strategy and severe will-power. With his escape to more congenial work under a London publisher the "Autobiography" closes.

In the "Deliverance" Rutherford gradually squares himself with Fate. He undertakes an organised social work, which, though of little direct success, reacts advantageously on himself. He is able to "submit to be useless," apprehending that "the core of religion is the relationship of the individual to the whole, the faith that the poorest and meanest of us is a person." He draws inspiration from his old lover, Ellen Butts, who has become a changed woman under stress of a disastrous marriage. Mrs. Butts has come to love her fellow creatures and to hope for nothing again from her love; she is merciful, because God is merciful. Rutherford sees this as the expression of the *idea* in morality, and he rejoices that Christ should have been bold enough to teach the idea, and not any limitation of it. He always taught it, proclaims Rutherford—the inward born, the heavenly law towards which everything strives. . . . He relied on it to the uttermost, never despairing.

Consistently to pursue and apply this doctrine demands unusual courage, and to fortify him the author falls back upon a curious mode of impersonal idealism, to wit, that "our aim ought not so much to be the salvation of this poor petty self, but of that in me which alone makes it worth while to save me; of that alone which I hope will be saved, immortal truth," the only satisfaction allowed being "a consciousness of approval by the Unseen, a peace unspeakable which is bestowed upon us when self is suppressed."

Summing up Rutherford's interpretation of Christianity, he does not seek to satisfy the intellect with a system. "Nor does the Christian religion profess any such satisfaction. . . . but it is in accordance with our intuitions. Everywhere in nature we see exaction of penalties down to the uttermost farthing, but following after this we discern forgiveness, obliterating and restorative. Both tendencies exist. Christianity in strange historical fashion is an expression of nature, a projection of her into a biography and a creed."

"The Revolution in Tanner's Lane" (1887) shows us the journeyman printer, Zachariah Coleman, heroically resolving in 1814 to live through a future that he has suddenly made desolate by marrying the wrong

woman. His torment and self-mistrust are intensified by the gradual discovery that his traditional Calvinism is no longer adequate to his spiritual needs. We follow him in his campaigning comradeship with those who "strove for thirty years from the outbreak of the French Revolution onwards, not merely to rend the chains of the prisoners (of industry), but to achieve the more difficult task of convincing them that they would be happier if they were free." His friends laid down their lives for social reform; he himself faced the terrors of illness in the workhouse, the thought of which, in those days, was "more horrifying than the thought of inquisitional tortures." And to what end is all such agonising and bitter strife? To the end that we may "gladly consent to be crushed into indistinguishable dust, with no hope of record: rejoicing only if some infinitesimal portion of the good work may be achieved by our obliteration." Half the book finishes with Zachariah tending his motherless child, Pauline, the issue of his union with a revolutionary friend's daughter, when, after his first wife's death, he married out of love and spiritual affinity.

So far we have, emerging in the progress of the narrative, unflinching recognition of the pressure of the material world, and a bold admission of the futile aspects of the human struggle against it; as a countervailing gospel we have only the cult of an extreme and mystic idealism; and, as in the two earlier volumes, these phases have been dealt with mainly from the viewpoint of their subjective effect upon character. But now there is added an objective significance; we see this idealism working itself out in tangible results like yeast changing the nature of the body it mingles with. We are transported through a quarter of a century to the little town of Cowfold, sketched with fine satiric nuance. Here stood the Tanner's Lane Meeting-house, which was the centre of the dissenting activity for a whole district. It symbolised a decadent nonconformity, a religious policy that had become grossly hypocritical. The Rev. John Broad and his son, Thomas, embody this perverted sanctity. The story now links up the Colemans with the Broads. Thomas manoeuvres to attack the honour of Zachariah's daughter. He is dramatically exposed by her; thereupon the reign of the Broads is broken and their oligarchy shattered. Thus Zachariah's offspring smote imposture to the ground, and by inference we see idealism destroying false systems the world over, and substituting the true. We discern the moral coherence behind action and the connection between events apparently inconsequent. So Rutherford's conjectures justify themselves in the artistic sequence of this and the later stories.

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CARBER'S CRUISE.

AN IRONIC RHYME.

IV.

Whether from habit or because the heart
 Must needs go out to something, I, of late,
 In thinking over Carber and his part
 In this great scheme of things, have had a weight
 Upon my mind about the man that's rather
 Akin to that, I take it, of a father.

There's the poor devil on the German Ocean,
 His feet and fingers icy cold, his mind,
 As I have said, all chaos and commotion,
 Because—to think of it!—he couldn't find
 A way out of that evolution tangle—
 Why, Mrs. Miggs knows more who turns a mangle!

For Mrs. Miggs knows how to place a vest
 Within the india-rubber press, and turn
 The handle with no silly interest
 In those depressing matters that concern
 The cause of mangles, or their blood connection
 With mud or flatfish or the next election.

O you who turn all sorts of mental mangles,
 And roll out arguments, and rot, and rant,
 Whether with Euclid climbing up triangles,
 Or chasing transcendental tails with Kant—
 When will you learn that Kant's the only Kantian,
 And you are you, and all the world your mansion!

When Schopenhauer in a human rage
 Is readable, and when he talks of dreams
 Almost becomes a poet,¹ I engage
 In speculation on those Academes
 Where all philosophers, in bounden duty,
 Edit their works and burn what hasn't beauty.

But here I am again the moralist!
 The sort of man who teaches you to live
 But doesn't tell you he himself has missed
 The way into the Garden—let me give
 This truth to all, that we who moralise
 Would mend ourselves if only we were wise.

If I were you I wouldn't care a hang
 However much such geese as I am hissed,
 For satire is a sort of boomerang
 That hurtles back and hits the satirist.
 And that's what Mr. Belloc² doesn't see,
 And as for Mr. Crosland, deary me!

The thing that saves me then?—well, there's a
 rumour

Not contradicted yet by foes, and that's
 That I possess a sort of sense of humour
 And have a certain tenderness for cats.
 Besides, you saw just now that I could feel
 For Carber stiff and frozen at the wheel.

As for his notions, if I had my wish
 I'd say, "Look here now, don't you be an ass;
 No one wants Fichte but we all want fish,
 So drop that black coagulated mass
 Of cobwebs spun by philosophic spiders,
 And laugh again like other fish providers."

But no, he'll go his way; it's curious
 The way we go our way, as if we knew,
 Come weal or woe, the way that's best for us,
 By some blind instinct doing what we do.
 I too, you see, have some philosophy,
 But mine is different—it belongs to *me*.

But one thing worries me—I may as well
 Reveal the secret canker in the rose—
 It is the fact that knowing how to tell
 Handsaws from hawks, etcetera, and those
 Most necessary lies that truth exacts,
 I yet can't tell a story, and the facts

Against me I'll admit, though I aver
 It's not for want of trying! when I planned
 This tale about a hapless mariner
 I did not dream that so much out of hand
 The wretched man would get—the more I rhyme
 The more he seems to dodge me all the time.

Carber! Would I could pipe those songs to thee,
 Such as the island syrens sang of old,
 When lovelorn music wafted out to sea
 For pork in prospect lured to Circe's fold;
 Not to base ends, my Carber, thus to charm you,
 But where no Charley Darwins more would harm
 you.

Then would those casements opening on the foam
 Reveal their magic to thine eyes at last,
 And laughing naiads draw thy vessel home,
 And sudden ivy twine about the mast.
 Wild ivy, Carber! damme, *quelle floraison!*
 Ponder that picture, then your Darwins gaze on!

(1) "The old man stricken in years totters about or rests in a corner now only a shadow, a ghost of his former self. What remains there for death to destroy? One day a sleep is his last, and his dreams are ———. They are the dreams which Hamlet inquires after in the famous soliloquy. I believe we dream them even now." The World as Will and Idea.

(2) Hilaire Belloc. His poem, "The South Country," will be found in most modern anthologies.

Carber's Cruise: An Illustrated Edition.

THE ACADEMY

V.

As when a young girl exquisite and slender,
Leans back in dreams, at ease reclining, so
The crescent moon lay back in silver splendour
When, ere the morning, Carber went below,
And, passing on the stairs the ship's boy Jim,
Somewhat relieved himself by clouting him.

This was a very dangerous thing to do,
If Carber had but known, and as the sequel
Proves later on, for Jim the ship's boy, too,
Happened to have upon his mind an equal
Weight of intolerable woe, and brooded
As his superior officer in the crew did.

Not about monkey ancestors, oh dear no!
Not angels even, interested Jim;
He had his own particular Inferno,
Select and private, that's what troubled him.
And this was owing, I am bound to state,
To Sunday school and never being late.

Truth will prevail no doubt, though Homer dozes—
Truth with a T like this—nor all the rude
Fellows with fingers outstretched at their noses
Ever can alter that dear platitude;
Therefore I say serenely if with crudeness,
The boy was suffering from excessive goodness.

You know what goodness is, and how the meek
Hand maiden art, in serving right and wrong,
Is paid for it (less threepence) once a week
Sticks on her stamp, nor says, Oh, Lord, how
long——³

Goodness it was then that had bundled James
Out of the orchestra of the seraphames.

And this was how it happened—his school master
Seeking to inculcate the good, the true,
Waxing rhetorical on dark disaster
When the pale primrose makes a mess of you,
Moved half the class to boredom, some to sleep,
But into Jim's young mind his words sank deep.

Particularly did he note the thought—
Being a trifle morbid I admit—
That if the sinner's hand offend he ought
To cut it off, and so be rid of it.
He shuddered somewhat at such methods drastic,
But teacher said it—and Jim's mind was plastic.

(3) An allusion here to a system of State Insurance prevailing in the early part of the century. It was introduced into England, without milkshed, by one Lloyd George.

Editor: C.C.: A New Edition.

Outré or not the fact, or *infra dig*,

But that same night his widowed mother found
Edward, her youngest, squealing like a pig,
And—dreadful sight!—an ear upon the ground;
Edward had had the earache it appeared, it
Seemed to offend him—*voilà!* Jim had sheared it.

Oh simple IF contained in A and B,
And their equality with Y and Z,
And theirs again with N or M or D,
That proves conclusively that green is red;
You had your share in that black business I know,
When little Edward's ear fell on the lino.

But no one thought of that, they walloped Jim,
Nor gave him credit for his will to goodness;
And so farewell the young-eyed cherubim,
Exit Romance and enter Life's grim rudeness.
And, let deductions be correct or wrong ones,
Love laughs at logic-smiths and even young ones.

For Jim the sun on Gibeon stood still,
And in the valley of Ajalon the moon;
Home life thenceforward was a bitter pill,
No one approved his kindly act, and soon
Tiring, the lad decided, being irate,
His true profession was to be a pirate.

Thus with his early notion of injustice
Jim had pursued a tragical career,
And why he brooded, reader, now I trust is
Clear, and I'm sure that if it isn't clear,
Well, I can't make it clearer, you must seize on
Some other treatise on Sufficient Reason.

Take it for granted, will you, just for once,
That here was no lad lightly to offend,
Which, Carber, being, as we know, a dunce,
Certainly could not see, so there's an end.
Arguments leave me cold, there's no delight
In talking to convince ourselves we're right.

He went on brooding now while Carber slept,
And here awhile we'll leave him to his brooding—
Morose young character! he might have slept
Out of a play by Galsworthy⁴—including
Jim in the list of that philosopher's heroes,
Lord, what a gay and festive crowd of Pierrots!

(To be continued.)

(4) John Galsworthy, my Jo, John,
When first aquent we were,
Life had its share of woe, John,
My word, it had its share!
But now you ought to know, John,
You really ought to know,
It isn't always so, John,
John Galsworthy, my Jo.

Squib of the Period.

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REVIEWS.

THE ULTIMATE WAR BOOK.

J'accuse!—By a German. (Hodder & Stoughton.) 5s. net.

Precisely a year ago the publishers of this great country were in something of a quandary. The war had descended upon them like the unknown terror, and they looked forthwith for dire results to the only business. Nobody would wish to buy books, they apprehended, and when "war books" were suggested as a possible way out, they sniffed and wanted to be assured that the war was going to last. Then somebody who had acquired one of the priceless works of Bernhardt before the conflagration popped that work upon us, and sold many, many thousand copies. Since then it has been a case of war books and little else but war books all the time, and the cry is still they come. But for our own part we cannot pretend that we are yet altogether weary of them, or, to use a soldierly term, "fed up." On the other hand, we are not by any means as far away from that happy condition as the publishers might like us to be. We may go the length of confessing that in these last few months we have hoped that somebody would write and publish *the* war book and have done with it. And at length, as it seems to us, our hope is realised. "A German" has written *J'accuse!* a Mr. Alexander Gray has translated it, and Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton have published it in London, New York, and Toronto. What more a loving heart could wish is difficult to imagine. As to *J'accuse!* it is a ponderable volume bound in cheerful ochre, and it runs, with appendices, to 448 pages of solid print. We have read it and we are satisfied. Only one qualm about it rises in our mind, and that is as to the question of authorship. "A German" is one of those pseudonyms which cover a multitude of possibilities. Unlike other sorts of pseudonyms, it is intended effectually to hide the name of the author, and we shall not attempt to drag him from his pseudonymity for the very simple reason that we could not do it. But until he does himself the honour and us the pleasure of "coming forward" with his name and credentials we shall go about the world believing that it is against the nature of things for him to be a German. If a German wrote *J'accuse!* we can say only that Germans are the devil. For *J'accuse!* is not even a detached work. We agree heartily with every word in it which goes to damage Germany, but for all

that we are bound to say that it is the work of a partisan—a work which might have been written by a competent Englishman if he had taken the trouble, or a work which we might reasonably pronounce to have been written by a Frenchman possessed of some knowledge of the German language, an unusual sense of the value of the document, and an assiduous pair of scissors. In these surmises or conjectures we may be entirely wrong, and we are not suggesting that a firm of the reputation of Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton would knowingly offer to the reading public a book which professed to be the handiwork of a German when the author was really of some other nationality. And it may be, of course, that we are so entirely wrong as to be doing an injustice to an absolutely worthy Teuton—probably the only one alive. In which case we beg the gentleman's pardon. For the rest, *J'accuse!* is the essence, harvest, epitome, conspectus, and bringing together of the facts about the War, of the truth about the War, and of all that a reasonable person could desire in his wildest dreams to know about the War. We have seen it asserted over and over again that the present trouble is too vast and too involved ever to be properly comprehended by the human intellect. We have never agreed with this assertion, and we think that *J'accuse!* proves us to be right in our difference. An endeavour to deal adequately with the book by review would be doomed to failure from the outset. We can say only to any person who desires to have by him a war book that will suffice for all his reading on the academic aspects of what has taken place on the continent of Europe since August last may purchase or otherwise acquire *J'accuse!* with the greatest confidence, and having perused and assimilated what is therein set forward he will not need to trouble himself further with regard to the matter.

VERY OPEN SECRETS.

The Red Secrets of the Hohenzollerns.—By Dr. ARMGAARD KARL GRAVES (The German Spy). (McBride Nast.) 2s. net.

It is a nice question whether at the present moment we are justified in purchasing the books of Germans, even though the said Germans happen to be German spies. The publishers of the present booklet must have acquired the right to issue Dr. Karl Graves' lucubration in one of several different ways. Either they have dealt with him directly by paying him a sum down for his work or by arranging

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to pay him a royalty. Failing which, they have arranged for the publication through agents, English, American, or otherwise. In any case, it is not to be supposed that the author proffers his book to the British public without fee, reward, or the hope of gain. And it is to be assumed that anybody who buys *The Red Secrets of the Hohenzollerns* for two shillings directly or indirectly puts a certain number of pence into the pocket of Dr. Karl Graves, who is announced on his own cover as "the German spy." This is a serious point, and a point to be pondered by the eager speculator. The fact remains, however, that quite a number of English people will indubitably purchase this two shillingworth, for the very simple reason that anything about the Hohenzollerns is just as interesting at this moment as anything about the brides-in-the-bath murderer was interesting a couple of weeks ago, and, of course, "red secrets" about anybody, let alone the Hohenzollerns, are exactly the kind of secrets in which the two-shilling public may be confidently expected to revel. The unfortunate part of it is, however, that the present "secrets" do not appear to us to be either red or secrets. In point of fact, if they may be considered secrets at all they are open secrets, and if they have any colour at all we should call them drab with an occasional divargation into the fairly blue. Neither are all of them by any means secrets concerning the Hohenzollerns. In his purely literary aspects, Dr. Karl Graves reminds us somewhat of Mr. William le Queux. When Mr. le Queux writes fiction he conveys the impression that he is writing fiction for all he is worth; when he writes fact one is apt to wonder whether after all fact is not more fictional than fiction. This is no reflection on Mr. le Queux, who we believe tells the truth as it seems to him when he is out to tell it, and tells the tale only when he is busy on his "next new" fictional *chef d'œuvre*. Dr. Karl Graves does not tell us whether he intends *The Red Secrets of the Hohenzollerns* for fact or fiction, but the book is written in such a way that when you have paid your money you can take your choice. It contains a good deal which may obviously be fact, and it contains a good deal which may or may not be fiction. But we believe that any reader of tolerant mind and ample leisure who takes up *The Red Secrets of the Hohenzollerns* will not put it down till he has had his two shillingworth, which he undoubtedly will have had when he comes to the German spy's last words. There is one feature of the book which will irritate many people into thought. And it is this. Roughly speaking, Dr. Graves tacitly

attributes the war, not to national forces, but to petty influences. He has a tale of a woman or a favourite to account for the beginning of everything, and he says flatly that when the true inwardness of what is happening is revealed to us we shall find that a young woman of the name of Schratt, a Russian priest of the name of Rasputin, and an English lady whose name we will not mention will be found to have had a good deal of a hand in this "latest outbreak of insanity in Europe." What truth there may be in such a theory the historians will doubtless decide if they happen to light upon it.

IN THE ORCHARDS.

It was Sunday morning.

The church bells at the end of the coombe had stopped ringing, and in the orchards the sultry quiet of the day gathered down.

A fat man, dressed in grey flannel trousers and a tweed coat, with a newspaper in his hand, came through the path by the gooseberry bushes, carefully untied the gate which led into the long meadow where two cows were peacefully grazing, and stepped into the long grass. He hesitated; then walked irresolutely towards the stream, looked for a few minutes at the brown, hurrying water, sighed heavily, and at last strolled over to a patch of grass beaten down by the children yesterday evening, and threw himself on the ground.

"Oh, damn it all!" he said aloud.

Attracted by his humanity, a little cloud of flies, jerking their black bodies as they flew, gather round him. A frog jumped away through the wilderness of grass, alarmed. One of the cows resumed its feeding, moving slowly and aimlessly about; the other lay down in the shade of a tree and chewed. The man took off his coat, unfolded the newspaper, and began to read.

In the heavy silence came the distant purr of a motor-cycle, sounding hotly from the road where a rising cloud of dust showed its passing. The clumped grass was motionless, motionless the great clusters of docks which rose here and there amongst it. Above all rose the almost mechanical *chip-chap, chip-chap* of a bird somewhere away in the trees. The man threw the newspaper over his face, and, sprawling on his back, appeared to sleep.

"Damn! What's the good of it all?" he thought.

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The cow lazily approached and, assured that the form on the grass meant no harm, looked at it with uncurious eyes and cropped the green tufts. The trees on the hillside roared under a sudden gust of wind, the apple-petals rose in the air like a fall of snow, the grass bent for an instant and was still. The stream thudded softly over the stones. The little insects jerked up and down, singly or darting together in pairs. *Chip-chap, chip-chap.*

A blackbird flew silently out of a clump of brambles on the stream-bank and lit on an apple-bough, flirting its tail. A butterfly, its white wings tipped with orange, settled a moment on the purple ground-ivy in the hedge. The cow, forgetful of the man, ate placidly, having nothing else to do. Every moment the heat seemed to increase.

"Pouf!" The man suddenly flung off the newspaper. The cow started back, looking suspiciously and reproachfully at the figure that had betrayed its trust. The man took out his pocket handkerchief, mopped his forehead, and flapped vigorously. The blackbird hopped down from the bough and scudded away through the current bushes, to join the other birds which had been running about over the crumbling earth ever since dawn. In the hedges blue-bells and campions, rejoicing in the sun, leaned towards each other, the starlike flowers of the stitchwort thrust ever upwards, and the vetch crept imperceptibly to blossom. A magpie, chattering, rose from the hillside, and with quick flaps disappeared in the direction of the blue distance which shimmered between the violet-tinted trees. *Chip-chap* went the unseen bird: and the man cursed it for its monotonous song.

Turning over and away from the sun, he gazed up into the sky pale with heat. Now and then a seagull passed overhead, telling how near was the sea. The flies danced up and down. He waved his handkerchief and they disappeared, only to come drifting into sight again, busy, thousands and thousands of them.

"I wonder if they sting," he thought: and immediately an itching began to spread over his whole body, up his legs, across his chest, back, under his arms. . . . But he was too lazy to move, and only rubbed and banged his legs against the ground. The cow went away, disgusted at the fidgeting object.

A thrush began to sing, spoiling its whistle (he thought) with idiotic chucklings. The apple-blossom fluttered and fell; the stream was inaudible, as if the sunlight quenched all sound. In the grass a couple of red-headed flies tumbled and buzzed, a black

spider ran energetically to and fro, ants hurried along, never deviating from their path, climbing, creeping under the stalks.

The contemplation of so much insect life made the man shudder, and he sat up and slapped his legs. The things must be running up inside his trousers! So he turned up one trouser-leg to see. There was nothing. So he lay down again and watched.

"Ugh! How busy they are!"

Chip-chap, chip-chap!

"Ugh! Sunday!"

Down the coombe the tuneless bell rang sharply a dozen times. Church! He yawned. . . .

The orchards grew all the more silent for the spent noise. The idle cows, the flies, the tireless birds and rustling boughs, all seemed to accentuate the silence rather than break it. But a wren, which had been creeping through the nettles, suddenly burst out into a bubbling song, loud and piercing.

"How damnable!" said the man.

And rising to his feet he took up the sheets of the newspaper, put on his coat, and walked over to the stream. A cool wind blew by the water, the dark shape of a trout darted away. More tiny insects rose as he slouched through the grass, and Daddy-long-legs trailing their tapering legs after them. Near the gate the cow was standing with its forefeet in a stagnant puddle. As he approached it backed off, still suspicious.

"You fool!" said the man. "What d'you want to move for?"

And untying the gate, he loitered through the path by the gooseberry bushes, and with undiminished appetite went home to his lunch.

Silence once more settled down on the orchards. The cows ambled from clump to clump. The flies hovered and courted. *Chip-chap, chip-chap* sang the bird somewhere away in the violet-tinted trees. . . .

GERALD MILLER.

We note with pleasurable anticipation that the "Times" is to issue on Monday next, as a special supplement, a selection of war poems which have appeared in its columns. Most of those we have lighted upon up to the present, to say the least of it have not been worthy of their subject, but a lyric, "Venizel," and the fine poem by the late Julian Grenfell were of the stuff of which poetry is made, and we look forward to seeing more work of the same quality which it may be we have missed.

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THE PEDESTRIAN POET.

He was a man with the most extraordinary mane of white hair that I ever saw; and it was evident that it was cultivated, or rather neglected, in this fashion as a species of trade-mark, a badge of profession. For attached to his person he bore a kind of apron or placard announcing himself as "John White, The Pedestrian Poet." It was a dangerous epithet to apply, the term pedestrian being often used of poetry in anything but a flattering sense; yet in this artistic meaning I found he was correct. Meeting him in a train, he appeared to have forfeited the literal application. The carriage was fairly full of Wiltshire countryfolk. He rested for a few minutes while we all covertly stared at him; and then he began to talk. He pointed to his placard as though he was presenting us with his private card; and he announced himself as the "only travelling poet since the days of Shakespere and Goldsmith." I was slightly puzzled by the juxtaposition. It is true that Shakespere travelled as an actor, and Goldsmith as flute-playing vagrant, neither of them certainly ever urged penny copies of their poems on an unwilling public. There was much of the pride of succession in his tone as he declared this illustrious pedigree; but, taking him as the last of the minstrels, his claim was ludicrous and absurd. And yet, if profuse white hair and vague dreamy eyes are bard-like, it cannot be denied that he looked his part; he amply fulfilled some stagey conception of an old-world Homer or Oisín. From the stock-in-trade what he carried he now produced copies of his "latest," a plain-printed sheet in memory of a recent tremendous sea-catastrophe. Most of my fellow-travellers declined even to look at it—their pennies were not for poems. The pathos of the illustrious claim had no appeal to them; they were unmoved by the boast of many thousands sold, and even by the further boast that royalty had accepted the verses. Half ashamed, I retained the copy that reached my hands, and tendered my penny. But there was something like scorn as well as pity in my mind. This is not the representative of the minstrelsy that once rang through palace, and hall, and cottage; this is the mere quackery, the charlatanism, the counterfeit. The authentic muse needs no exaggerated white hair, no printed label. With all his venerable and bardish appearance, here was merely a self-deceived impostor. But what if some who buy this ballad are really moved by its cheap doggerel—what if to some it truly

appears as an echo of the divine utterance? Can we wisely scorn a thing, if to any man or woman whatsoever it comes as a living and moving reality? Is not the appeal of art a relative thing after all? Who shall deny to any the right of being as deeply touched by the pedestrianism of John White, as we ourselves may be by Dante or Goethe or Wordsworth? And when the shaggy-maned verse-maker moved away at Newbury station, with his heavy bag of stock on his shoulder, and with what seemed to me the ghastly ineptitude of his minstrel pretensions, I felt that *perhaps* he is really in the succession. For his verses had been bought by many, and possibly some had loved them.

A. L. S.

Messrs. Putnam announce a volume of "Letters of Washington Irving to Henry Brevoort" extending from 1807 to 1843, and mostly unpublished. These should be interesting. Irving's humanity and loving-kindness—as evidenced in his "Life of Oliver Goldsmith"—endear him to all "hungry sheep" who, looking up, "are not fed" by the sociological and statistical fare that seems to be characteristic of our own day. Messrs. Putnam also announce a book "dealing with twenty Popes whose careers and influence left their mark in the history of the world, as well as of the Church." Neither of these books, of course, are with us yet, but we would give any book about "twenty Popes" for one by Washington Irving.

We suspect that Mr. Erskine MacDonald has more than a merely commercial interest in poetry. He is bringing out six more volumes in the "Little Books of Georgian Verse" series, and early in September will publish more contemporary verse to be known as the "Twentieth Century Poetry" series. We are glad to hear of it.

When is Mr. Gosse's "Swinburne" coming out? After the poet's death there was much talk of a biography by the late Mr. Watts-Dunton, but nothing from the author of "Aylwin" fluttered the doves. We wait now for Mr. Gosse.

When one tries to be light and familiar and merry it is so easy to be merely pert and slangy and smart.—*Saturday Review*.

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"CAMEOS FROM THE CLASSICS."

It is not well to employ catch-words and catch-phrases during a time of grave peril. . . . As Borden is Canada, and Botha South Africa, so our Coalition must be the British Isles—the heart of the Empire.—*Saturday Review*.

As to the future of the land campaign in the autumn and winter, the future of the three great land campaigns, we shall not prophesy now. *Nobody knows*.—*Saturday Review*.

There is, it is true, no real ground for the feeling in certain classes that the rich are preaching economy to the poor, and neglecting to practise it.—*Saturday Review*.

Here is a little great book that soldiers ought to carry in their kits, and that women should keep by their bedside.—*Saturday Review*.

The volume contains, among other poems, a reprint of "The Sea-Farer," Mr. Pound's masterly translation from the original Anglo-Saxon. This poem, which the *New Age* had the honour of first publishing, is without doubt one of the finest literary works of art produced in England during the last ten years. I would put it myself alongside of Mrs. Hastings' "Odes" as the best serious verse the *New Age* has published. For this poem alone "Cathay" is worth the shilling charged for it.—*New Age*.

I wonder if anyone has any right to talk about themselves as much as I do? I can't believe that they have; and yet I can't stop.—Alice, Morning in the *New Age*.

Perhaps if man had less personal vindictiveness he would have more of that social zeal that we at present call patriotism.—*Nation*.

Carey's "Dante" is better or worse than Dr. Shadwell's merely as Carey is better or worse at English poetry than Dr. Shadwell.—*Nation*.

The story that angels were seen by the British troops during the battle of Mons has provoked two clergymen to diametrically opposing statements.—*Outlook*.

"We are not Hindu magicians," says Mr. Wyndham Lewis, "to make our mango-tree grow in half an hour." And that is a very sensible statement.—*Ford Madox Hueffer in the "Outlook"*.

The announcement that Mr. Henry James has chosen the time when this country is being supremely tried to throw in his lot with us is good hearing. Mr. James has paid us the highest honour in the power of an individual to bestow.—*Outlook*.

Yes, we are getting on.—*Outlook*.

Now is the time when everyone gets stung by a wasp.—*Nation*.

Criticism has not yet had time to go far with the salutary task of placing war literature in its proper perspective. A few pieces of work seem to us already to be visibly outstanding from the rest.—*Nation*.

"Oliver" is a sincere attempt to outline the impulses and motives of a boy and man, naturally refined, sensitive, and intelligent, but inclined to egoism, slyness, and self-indulgence.—*Nation*.

A nation at prayer.—*Evening News*.

"I am very deestressed," Mlle. Gaby Deslys told the *Evening News* to-day. "I 'ave lost my leetle dog, and since he gone I 'ave not slept all ze night," she said. "It is dreadful," and tears quivered in her eyes.—*Evening News*.

The visit of the King to his Fleet has turned the thoughts of many this week towards the British Navy. Perhaps our thoughts, normally, are less than they should be with the men and ships of the Fleet. The work of the Fleet is a silent and steady thing, of which almost nothing can be said in print.—*Saturday Review*.

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